

REMARKS

Claims 11 and 13-17 are pending. Claims 11, 16 and 17 have been amended. No new matter has been presented.

Applicants thank the Examiner for conducting a telephone discussion of this case on May 23 and May 27, 2008. During this discussion possible amendments to claims 11, 16 and 17 were discussed. The Examiner indicated that the amendments should track the exact language of the specification so as not to introduce new matter.

Claims 11, 13-15 and 16-17 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kamata, U.S. Patent No. 6,520,999, in view of Hoshiyama, U.S. Patent No. 5,560,751. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 11, 16 and 17 have been amended to clarify that the cooling mechanism is formed from a cooling pipe provided near the insertion port of the interior portion of the heating furnace. Support for this amendment can be found at paragraph [0034] of the specification. This amendment does not introduce new matter. Kamata and Hoshiyama fail to teach or suggest this feature, either alone or in combination.

Claims 13-15 are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

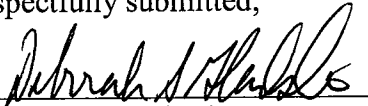
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection

with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no.
279222001000.

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Respectfully submitted,

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